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ABSTRACT

A questionnaire entitled "An Inquiry into Classroom Practices in the Teaching of Writing" was sent to 222 authorities comprising two groups: those who have published a work in the form of a book or monograph under the auspices of the National Council of Teachers of English since 1963, and those who have held administrative positions in the various projects comprising the National Writing Project. Respondents were asked to determine how often they believed specific practices should be used at the primary, middle, secondary and postsecondary grade levels. The 101 responses received indicated that authorities favor a predominantly process approach to teaching writing. Among the responses were the following: (1) writing exercises, such as free writing and brief writing exercises of about 5 or 10 minutes, should be provided slightly more than half the time at all grade levels; (2) students at all grade levels should be given the opportunity to select their own topics for slightly more than half their compositions; (3) the context for students' writing should involve a variety of audiences and modes; (4) writing needs to be connected to units of study in the content areas and the language arts; and (5) holistic scoring should be used at the primary level about half the time, primary trait analysis should be used for another quarter of the time, and the remaining percentage of assignments should be divided equally between analytic scoring and discourse analysis. These percentages change at the upper levels, with holistic scoring being used only one-third of the time. (Appended is the questionnaire with responses.) (HOD)

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What the Authorities Tell Us About Teaching Writing: Results of A Survey of Authorities on Teaching Composition

By
Carolyn Boiarsky, Ph.D.

A large discrepancy appears to exist between methods, attitudes, and behaviors recommended by authorities in the field for instruction in written discourse and teachers' actual practice in the classroom. While recent literature has recommended that writing instruction should be based on a process approach and should consider a developmental model for learning to write, many teachers, according to such surveys as those by Applebee (1981), Hoetker and Brossell(1979, 1980) and Petty and Finn(1981),continue to use the traditional product-oriented, rule-bound approach which was in vogue prior to the turn of the century. The retention of such an approach is rather analogous to a gynecologist today recommending that a woman in her mid-thirties, who is having difficulty conceiving, take a vacation with her husband rather than undergo a laparoscopy; the first solution being based on myth, the latter on scientific knowledge.

Cooper(1981) in the Foreward to Applebee's report on the teaching of writing in the nation's secondary schools, describes American high school writing programs as follows:

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> Students(are rarely asked)to produce original texts of more than two or three sentences....On the rare occasions that (they are asked) to compose extended written discourse ..(they would be requested)to finish it on the spot....Students would nearly always write transactionaldiscourse....Students would nearly always write to the teacher as examiner.
>
> When (teachers) ask for extended written discourse, (they) limit directions to a brief topic statement usually stated quite generally...(Teachers) limit...their responses to matters of usage, spelling and sentence structure....On the few occasions , when(they ask)students to revise their writing, (they will)be satisfied with small corrections and additions.(pp.xi-xii)

Why does a discrepancy exist between the methods which English educators expound and the methods which are actually practiced by the majority of the nation's teachers?

Several conclusions appear possible. First the frequency with which teachers use various methods is sufficient for engaging students in writing effectively. However, the brouhaha by the Carnegie Foundation, the decline in SAT scores and the complaints by business and industrial leaders over students' writing proficiency appears to indicate otherwise. Secondly, there is a discrepancy between educators' perceptions of the frequency with which teachers should use certain methods related to the process approach and teachers' perceptions of the frequency with which they should use these methods. Finally, teachers fall into Nelson's schizophrenic category. Nelson(1981), who conducted an ethnographic study of the teaching practices of 23 teachers of writing, found that many teachers held a dual view of teaching composition. While many had incorporated some process-oriented behaviors

into their teaching repertoire, they had not been willing to replace old methods. Rather, they had only been willing to increase slightly or to add some methods to their repertoire.

All three of these reasons indicate a failure on the part of teachers to recognize how often to use the various process-oriented methods so that they can develop effective strategies for writing instruction. For example, teachers do not know whether all papers should be graded holistically or whether evaluation procedures should be mixed, with some being graded using primary trait analysis and others discourse analysis. They don't know what percentage of assignments students should be allowed to write for each other as audience and what percentage to write for the teacher as evaluator. Myers (1983) talks of integrating the three models- processing, distancing and modeling - which he discusses in his book, Theory and Practice in the Teaching of Composition, but just how this integration is to occur he doesn't say.

In an effort to provide teachers with some sort of basis for determining when and how often to use certain methods, we decided to go back to the experts to try to pin them down. We wanted to know what exactly did they mean when they said students should be able to select their own topics. Did they mean all of the time or only once or twice? Would elementary students be given this opportunity as often as postsecondary students or did they need more guidance?

A questionnaire based on a review of the literature was developed and validated by a panel of experts. The instrument, "An Inquiry into Classroom Practices in the Teaching of Writing," was then sent to 222 authorities, comprising two groups. The first group was defined as those who had published a work in the form of a book or monograph, either as an author or coauthor, editor or coeditor, under the auspices of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) since 1963. The second group was defined as those who held administrative positions in the various projects comprising the National Writing Project(NWP). The inclusion of persons representing these combined categories appeared to provide a means of surveying persons who possessed both theoretical knowledge and field experience in the teaching of writing at several grade levels. Respondents were asked to determine how often they believed specific practices should be used at each of four grade levels - primary, middle, secondary and post-secondary. Twenty-one of the items used a 7-point scale which included the following ratings: always, all but once or twice, slightly more than half the time, half the time, slightly less than half the time, only once or twice, never. On five items respondents were asked to designate a percentage of time for a method.

One hundred-one persons responded, with 31 being NCTE authors and 70 NWP administrators. The data were analyzed descriptively and inferentially. Two types of experimental design were used to analyze the data inferentially. A subjects-by-treatment analysis of variance was used to study the differences between each of the four grade levels while

a split-plot analysis of variance design was used to study differences between the two types of authorities. No significance was found for the latter.

Tentative norms for teaching writing emerge for 19 practices. For the purposes of this study, 68%(the percent of responses which fall within one standard deviation from the mean) of the respondents must agree within a one-point spread on the rating scale for an item in order for a tentative norm for that item to be established. For example, at least 68% of the respondents need to circle a rating of either a four or a five in order for a mean of 4.7 to be considered a tentative norm for that item. Table 1 provides a list of those tentative norms which have been derived from the item responses which meet the criteria for a norm. A complete listing of items, their respective means for each grade level and an interpretation of the results can be found in Tables 3 and 4.

Grade level appears to be a key factor in determining the frequency with which many of the practices should be used. A gradual change in frequency with an increase in grade level is recommended for many of the practices, with significant differences often noted between the elementary and the secondary and postsecondary levels and between the middle and postsecondary levels. (See Table 2)

The responses indicate that authorities favor a predominantly process approach to teaching writing which is congruent with children's development as indicated by different ratings at the various grade levels. Throughout the school year, teachers should spend most of their time in teaching writing by engaging students in the three stages of the composing process. Students at all levels should almost always be

engaged in rehearsal experiences. Furthermore, when drafting, students at all grade levels should be permitted to explore what they have to say and to erase, cross out, insert, and cut and paste as they do so. Formal outlines should not be required more than once or twice at the upper levels and never at the lower levels. Students should be encouraged to revise their work in additional drafts with such revisions, when necessary, extending beyond mere proofreading to include such major changes as voice, tone organization, etc. At the lower levels students should be encouraged to engage in such revisions more than half the time while at the upper levels students should be encouraged to engage in such revision almost always. To support this process teacher and/or peer conferences should be conducted between and during drafts at all grade levels. Peer groups should be used to provide students with feedback on the compositions slightly more than half the time with the other half of the time being devoted to teacher-student conferences.

In an effort to help students develop fluency, beginning writers at the primary level should be permitted to dictate their discourse to someone about half the time. Writing activities, such as free writing and brief writing exercises of about five or ten minutes, should be provided slightly more than half the time, regardless of grade levels. In addition, at all levels one of the specific activities for developing fluency - keeping a journal for at least a six- to eight-week period - should almost always be required.

Students' fluency as well as their ability to write an effective composition depends heavily on their motivation which is often affected by their interest in the topic and their knowledge of the topic. For slightly more than half their compositions, students at all grade levels should be given the opportunity to select their own topics. However, many authorities recommend that the teacher retain some control over the selection. One method for doing so is by determining the umbrella topic and then permitting the students to determine their own subtopic under it. At the primary and middle levels students should also almost always be able to write from their own experiences, with that opportunity decreasing to slightly more than half the time by the secondary level and to only about half the time at the postsecondary level. Furthermore, students should be able to write out their ideas without regard to length or a specific syntactic structure, such as a sentence or a paragraph. They should have this freedom almost always at the primary level but only slightly more than half at the other levels. At the primary level students should also spend almost half their time developing a composition as part of a group activity. However, by the secondary and postsecondary levels group writing should occur only about once or twice.

Finally, because the end goal of all writing for communication is for the writing to be read by an audience, students should be able to read their compositions aloud to their class or to a small group of peers and have their work published or displayed. This should occur slightly more than half the time at the lower levels and about half the time at the upper levels.

In addition, teachers of all grade levels should share their own writing with their students for a little more than half the assignments.

The context for students' writing should involve a variety of audiences and modes. At the primary level students should spend about half their time writing in the expressive mode and another third of their time writing in the poetic mode. They should spend only about 10% of their time writing in each of the two transactional modes. As grade level increases, students should spend less time writing in the expressive and poetic modes and more time writing in the two transactional modes. In the middle grades they should be spending only one-third of their time writing in the expressive mode and only a quarter of their time writing in the poetic mode, but they should be spending about 20% of their time writing in each of the transactional modes. In the secondary level the amount of time spent writing in the expressive mode should have declined to 25% and the amount of time in the poetic mode should have declined to 20%, while the amount of time spent in the two transactional modes should have increased to about 25% for each. Finally, at the postsecondary level the amount of time spent in the expressive mode should have dropped to less than 20% and in the poetic mode to only slightly more than 10%, while the amount of time spent in the two transactional modes should have increased to one-third of the time for each.

The audiences students write for should also be varied. At the primary level, students should write for themselves and their peers

about half the time, with another third of the time split between writing for a known outside audience and for the teacher in a role other than evaluator. The remaining 15% of the time should be split between writing for an unknown outside audience and for the teacher as evaluator. By the postsecondary level students should be writing for themselves only about 10% of the time. The amount of time they spend writing for their peers should also have decreased, but only to about 20%. The amount of time students spend writing for an unknown outside audience and for the teacher as evaluator should have increased to about 20% for each, while the amount of time students spend writing for the teacher in a role other than evaluator and for a known outside audience should remain fairly constant across grade levels.

Writing also needs to be connected to units of study in the content areas and in the language arts. This relationship should be explicitly established about half the time, regardless of grade level. However, literary models should be used only once or twice at the primary level and no more than half the time at the secondary level.

Special attention needs to be paid to developing a valid relationship between the study of language, as one aspect of the language arts, and writing. Lessons in sentence combining, slotting, and embedding, designed to help develop students' syntactic maturity and fluency, should be provided slightly less than half the time at the lower grade levels and should decline to almost never at the postsecondary level. As the basis for instruction in punctuation,

spelling, vocabulary, and usage, teachers should use students' own compositions about three-quarters of the time and exercises in textbooks the remaining time.

Assessment of student writing should be congruent with the type of instruction outlined by these responses. To reflect the three stages of the composing process, teachers should always wait to grade papers until after students have had an opportunity to revise at least one draft. Various types of assessments should be conducted, depending on the teacher's purposes. However, an error count should almost never be used. At the primary level holistic scoring should be used about half the time, primary trait analysis should be used for another quarter of the time and the remaining percentage of assignments should be equally divided between analytic scoring and discourse analysis.

The percent of papers to be scored by three of the forms of assessment - holistic, analytic and discourse - changes at the secondary and postsecondary levels. On these upper levels, teachers should be using holistic scoring only about one-third of the time but should be increasing their use of analytic scoring to about 20% of the time and their use of discourse analysis to 15%.

This study provides only tentative, not definitive, norms for the frequency with which various methods should be used in the teaching of writing. The norms which these results suggest need to be tested in the field to determine if the proposed frequencies for the various methods studied are effective in helping students develop and improve their writing proficiency.

Perhaps the greatest need which this study indicates is for

teachers, especially at the lower levels, to become researchers themselves, to test out and evaluate the results of their use of the various practices. There has often been a split between teachers in the field and university faculty, with teachers claiming university members sit in their ivory towers, spouting theories, unaware of the circumstances under which they are expected to teach, and unable to relate their theories to the actual classroom situation, while university members wring their hands, bemoaning the teachers' failure to apply the methods which their theories, their research, and their observations indicate are effective. Over the past two decades, university educators have increasingly moved into the field to observe, to conduct research, and to work with student teachers in actual classroom situations. They are no longer simply spouting theories out of books; they have begun to merge the two worlds of theory and practice and need to continue to do so. However, only a few teachers, at the encouragement of the National Writing Project, have expanded their role to include that of the researcher and have become capable of objectively evaluating the results of their own experiences in terms of student performance. An increasing number will need to do so, becoming authorities themselves, if surveys such as this one are to truly reflect how various methods can be used effectively in the classrooms of varying levels.

It seems apparent that teachers need to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to use the practices discussed in this study. Teachers should be urged to use those practices for which tenta-

tive norms have been derived as often in their teaching as the study suggests. In addition, they should be urged to use the other practices at least half the time.

Perhaps the greatest concern among educators is how to train teachers to utilize these practices so that they are sufficiently competent to engage in them as often as this study indicates they should. Gagne(1977) points out that teachers are apt to fall back on their old attitudes if they appear to be as good as any new ones. Thus, if teachers are to use the new practices as often as suggested, staff development sessions are needed to help teachers adopt new attitudes toward these practices as well as new skills and knowledge for implementing them.

It is hoped that the results of this survey will provide tentative norms which can be used to develop a model for composition instruction. In addition, while these norms are based on ideal conditions, teachers should attempt to achieve the recommended frequency rates as much as possible. For example, while the results indicate that secondary students should have an opportunity to write in the expressive mode about a quarter of the time, teachers may not always be able to provide this opportunity. However, because of their knowledge of what an ideal frequency should be, teachers should attempt to provide students with such assignments as close to 25% of the time as possible, rather than only once or twice or as often as half the time.

As teachers begin to use these tentative norms for determining the frequency with which to use the various methods in their classroom, they should be able to perceive improvements in student writing proficiency and an expansion of students' capability in writing in a variety of contexts in various modes and genres. The teachers, themselves, should experience an increase in their own enjoyment in teaching composition. Finally, if teachers have become researchers themselves, they should begin to recognize which of these norms are appropriate and which need to be modified to reflect actual effective classroom practice.

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Table 1

Tentative Norms Derived from Inquiry into Classroom Practices for Teaching Writing

Primary Level

1. Teachers should always engage students in rehearsal experiences.

2. Teachers should never require students to write a formal outline.

3. Teachers should always encourage students to write from their own experiences.

4. Teachers should not assign writing which uses literary works for students to read, analyze, and imitate more than once or twice in each course.

5. Teachers should allow students to write out ideas without regard for length all but once or twice a course.

6. Teachers should always encourage students to erase, cross out, cut and paste all but their final drafts.

7. Teachers should assign students to keep a journal for a six- to eight-week period for all but one or two courses.

8. Teachers should publish or display students' work all but once or twice a course.

9. Teachers should not assess student writing using an error count or discourse analysis more than 5% of the time for each method of assessment.

10. Teachers should assign writing in the transactional mode about one-third of the time.

11. Teachers should not assume the role of evaluator more than 10% of the time.

Middle Level

1. Teachers should always engage students in rehearsal activities.

2. Teachers should not require students to write a formal outline more than once or twice each course.

3. Teachers should require students to keep a journal for a six- to eight-week period for all but one or two courses.

4. Teachers should provide students with opportunities to write a composition as a group activity about half the time.

5. Teachers should provide beginning writers with opportunities to dictate their discourse slightly less than half the time.

6. Students should be encouraged to write from their own experiences all but once or twice each course.

7. Teachers should assign writing which uses literary works for students to read, analyze, and imitate slightly less than half the time.

8. Teachers should always encourage students to erase, cross out, cut and paste all but their final drafts.

9. Teachers should encourage students to write more than one draft of a composition in which successive drafts include, when necessary, major revisions for all but one or two assignments.

10. Teachers should not assess compositions using an error count or discourse analysis more than 5% of the time for each method of evaluation.

11. Teachers should assign writing in the transactional/ expressive mode about 20% of the time.

Secondary Level

1. Teachers should engage students in rehearsal experiences all but once or twice each course.

2. Teachers should not require students to write a formal outline more than once or twice each course.

3. Teachers should require students to keep a journal for a six- to eight-week period for all but one or two courses.

4. Teachers should provide opportunities for students to write a composition as a group activity slightly less than half the time.

5. Teachers should provide beginning writers with opportunities to dictate their discourse once or twice each course.

6. Teachers should always encourage students to erase, cross out, cut and paste all but their final drafts.

7. Teachers should encourage students to write more than one draft in which successive drafts include, when necessary, major revisions for all but one or two assignments.

8. Teachers should not use an error count or discourse analysis to assess student compositions more than 5% of the time for each method of evaluation.

9. Teachers should allow students to write for themselves about 15% of the time.

Postsecondary Level

1. Teachers should engage students in rehearsal experiences all but once or twice each course.

2. Teachers should not require students to write a formal outline more than once or twice each course.

3. Teachers should require students to keep a journal for a six- to eight-week period for all but one or two courses.

4. Teachers should provide students with opportunities to write a composition as a group activity slightly less than half the time.

5. Teachers should provide beginning writers with opportunities to dictate their discourse once or twice each course.

6. Teachers should always encourage students to erase, cross out, cut and paste all but their final drafts.

7. Teachers should always encourage students to write more than one draft of a composition in which successive drafts include, when necessary, major revisions.

8. Teachers should assign lessons in sentence combining, slotting, etc., several times a course.

9. Teachers should not assess compositions using an error count or a discourse analysis more than 5% of the time.

Table 2

Items in Which Significant Differences Exist Between Grade Levels[a]

	Item	Grade[b]	n	SD	Mean[c]	Mean Pairwise Difference
1.	Engaging students in rehearsal experiences.	PR	72	.64	5.69	.63**
		PS	72	1.27	5.06	
3.	Requiring students to write a formal outline.	PR	74	.87	.35	.56**
		SE	74	1.04	.91	
		PR	74	.87	.35	.76**
		PS	74	1.41	1.11	
		MD	75	.89	.56	.55**
		PS	75	1.40	1.11	
5.	Encouraging students to write more than one draft in which successive drafts include, when necessary, major revisions.	PR	72	1.91	4.36	.52**
		MD	72	1.45	4.88	
		PR	72	1.91	4.36	.95**
		SE	72	1.04	5.31	
		PR	72	1.91	4.36	1.13**
		PS	72	.89	5.49	
		MD	73	1.45	4.89	.60**
		PS	73	.88	5.49	
7.	Encouraging students to write from their own experiences.	PR	72	.88	5.35	1.18**
		SE	72	1.30	4.17	
		PR	71	.83	5.38	1.72**
		PS	71	1.54	3.66	
		MD	73	.94	4.92	.76**
		SE	73	1.29	4.16	

(table continues)

Item	Grade[b]	n	SD	Mean[c]	Mean Pairwise Difference
	MD	72	.92	4.94	1.27**
	PS	72	1.53	3.67	
	SE	73	1.30	4.88	.55**
	PS	73	1.52	3.66	
8. Assigning students to write about ideas without regard for length.	PR	72	1.38	4.88	.59**
	SE	72	1.39	4.29	
	PR	72	1.38	4.88	.69**
	PS	72	1.68	4.19	
10. Assigning students lessons sentence combining, slotting, etc.	PR	69	1.55	1.14	.60**
	PS	69	1.04	1.74	
	MD	71	1.32	2.35	.63**
	PS	71	1.03	1.72	
	SE	71	1.03	2.30	.62**
	PS	71	1.04	1.68	
11a. Requiring students to write in the expressive mode.	PR	71	18.69	47.61%	19.30**
	SE	71	12.84	28.31%	
	PR	72	18.75	47.29%	27.22**
	PS	72	11.67	20.07%	
	MD	72	15.38	37.57%	17.78**
	PS	72	11.67	19.79%	
11c. Requiring students to write in the transactional/functional mode.	PR	71	10.68	10.99%	14.29**
	SE	71	11.05	25.28%	
	PR	72	10.73	11.18%	23.40**
	PS	72	15.37	34.58%	
	MD	72	12.04	18.75%	16.11**
	PS	72	15.47	34.86%	

(table continues)

Item	Grade[b]	n	SD	Mean[c]	Mean Pairwise Difference
11d. Requiring students to write in the transactional/ expressive mode.	PR	71	12.43	12.97%	13.37**
	SE	71	8.11	26.34%	
	PR	72	12.42	13.14%	17.14**
	PS	72	13.08	30.28%	
	MD	72	10.83	19.24%	10.90**
	PS	72	13.14	30.14%	
12a. Assigning students to write for themselves.	PR	63	19.18	28.75%	10.42**
	SE	63	14.37	18.33%	
	PR	63	19.18	28.75%	15.18**
	PS	63	14.80	13.57%	
13. Assigning writing which uses literary works for students to read, analyze, and imitate.	PR	72	1.39	1.33	.96**
	SE	72	1.18	2.29	
	PR	72	1.39	1.33	1.20**
	PS	72	1.39	2.53	
	MD	73	1.30	1.79	.54**
	SE	73	1.24	2.33	
	MD	73	1.30	1.79	.77**
	PS	73	1.41	2.56	
20. Providing opportunities for developing a composition as a group activity.	PR	74	1.55	2.59	1.00**
	PS	74	1.43	1.59	
	MD	74	1.41	2.23	.59**
	PS	74	1.46	1.64	
21. Providing beginning writers opportunities to dictate their discourse.	PR	67	1.79	2.67	.86**
	MD	67	1.50	1.79	
	PR	67	1.79	2.67	1.33**
	SE	67	1.57	1.34	

(table continues)

Item	Grade[b]	n	SD	Mean[c]	Mean Pairwise Difference
	PR	68	1.82	2.72	1.66**
	PS	68	1.57	1.16	
	MD	69	1.50	1.75	.62**
	PS	69	1.57	1.13	
22. Providing opportunities to read their compositions aloud to class.	PR	74	1.49	4.43	.55**
	SE	74	1.72	3.88	
	PR	74	1.49	4.41	.79**
	PS	74	1.88	3.62	
	MD	74	1.52	4.31	.67**
	PS	74	1.88	3.64	
23. Publishing or displaying students' papers.	PR	72	1.39	4.79	.69**
	SE	72	1.52	4.10	
	PR	71	1.40	4.79	1.58**
	PS	71	2.02	3.21	
	MD	73	1.36	4.66	.54**
	SE	73	1.53	4.12	
	MD	72	1.38	4.65	1.40**
	PS	72	2.03	3.25	
	SE	74	1.52	4.11	.89**
	PS	74	2.04	3.22	
25b. Assessing compositions using holistic scoring.	PR	66	30.61	52.80%	10.98**
	MD	66	26.91	41.82%	
	PR	64	30.80	53.20%	16.32**
	SE	64	23.76	36.88%	
	PR	66	30.61	52.80%	19.62**
	PS	66	26.29	33.18%	

[a]Significance was determined using a Tukey test. In addition, differences between mean scores needed to be greater than .5 in order to be considered significant for this study for practical purposes, since it is impossible to discern smaller differences in actual practice.

[b]PR = grades 1-4; MD = grades 5-8; SE = grades 9-12; PS = postsecondary.

[c]The mean is based on the following scale for all items except Items 11, 12, and 25, which are percentages:

0 = Never
1 = Only Once or Twice
2 = Slightly Less Than Half the Time
3 = Half the Time
4 = Slightly More Than Half the Time
5 = All But Once or Twice
6 = Always

Table 3

Mean Frequency Scores and Modes for Each Item at Four Grade Levels as Recommended by Authorities

Item[a]	Grade[b]	n	Mean	SD	Mode
1. Engaging students in rehearsal experiences.	PR	73	5.67	.64	6
	MD	72	5.51	.77	6
	SE	73	5.26	1.04	6
	PS	86	4.98	1.36	6
2. Allowing students to select their own topics.	PR	71	4.37	1.37	5
	MD	71	4.28	1.12	5
	SE	73	4.14	1.13	5
	PS	86	4.08	1.28	5
3. Requiring students to write a formal outline.	PR	75	.35	.86	0
	MD	75	.56	.89	0
	SE	76	.90	1.03	1
	PS	88	1.05	1.41	1
4. Encouraging students to erase, cross out, cut and paste all but their final drafts.	PR	74	5.89	.71	6
	MD	74	5.96	.20	6
	SE	75	5.91	.41	6
	PS	88	5.84	.74	6
5. Encouraging students to write more than one draft in which successive drafts include, when necessary, major revisions.	PR	72	4.36	1.91	6
	MD	73	4.89	1.45	6
	SE	76	5.28	1.07	6
	PS	89	5.49	.89	6
6. Assigning writing activities for increasing fluency.	PR	68	4.40	1.63	6
	MD	67	4.27	1.70	6
	SE	69	4.07	1.83	6
	PS	82	3.73	2.06	6
7. Encouraging students to write from their own experiences.	PR	73	5.32	.91	6
	MD	73	4.92	.94	5
	SE	74	4.19	1.30	4
	PS	85	3.60	1.48	4

(table continues)

Item[a]	Grade[b]	n	Mean	SD	Mode
8. Assigning students to write about ideas without regard for length.	PR	72	4.88	1.36	6
	MD	73	4.64	1.25	5
	SE	74	4.32	1.39	5
	PS	87	4.18	1.72	6
9. Requiring students to keep journals.	PR	72	4.88	2.31	6
	MD	74	5.30	1.91	6
	SE	75	5.31	1.90	6
	PS	88	4.89	2.30	6
10. Assigning students lessons in sentence combining, slotting, etc.	PR	71	2.14	1.56	3
	MD	72	2.36	1.31	4
	SE	72	2.29	1.03	2
	PS	86	1.64	1.02	1
11a. Requiring students to write in the expressive mode.	PR	72	47.29	18.75	50
	MD	72	37.57	15.38	30
	SE	73	27.67	13.26	20
	PS	86	18.90	11.94	20
11b. Requiring students to write in the poetic mode.	PR	72	30.83	14.61	40
	MD	72	26.81	12.29	25
	SE	73	20.34	8.47	20
	PS	86	13.95	10.09	10
11c. Requiring students to write in the transactional/functional mode.	PR	72	11.18	10.73	10
	MD	72	18.75	12.04	20
	SE	73	26.30	12.67	25
	PS	86	35.70	16.47	30
11d. Requiring students to write in the transactional/expressive mode.	PR	72	13.13	12.42	10
	MD	72	19.24	10.83	20
	SE	73	26.23	8.03	25
	PS	86	30.87	14.21	30
12a. Assigning students to write for themselves.	PR	64	28.69	19.04	20
	MD	65	23.08	14.65	20
	SE	66	17.65	14.42	20
	PS	78	12.82	14.13	10
12b. Assigning students to write for their peers.	PR	64	28.52	13.71	30
	MD	65	27.46	11.83	20
	SE	66	23.03	11.02	20
	PS	78	19.94	14.47	20
12c. Assigning students to write for a known outside audience.	PR	65	15.08	10.84	20
	MD	65	18.23	9.58	20
	SE	66	18.64	11.92	20
	PS	78	20.83	14.78	20

(table continues)

Item[a]	Grade[b]	n	Mean	SD	Mode
12d. Assigning students to write for an unknown outside audience.	PR	65	6.15	9.50	0
	MD	65	9.31	9.64	0
	SE	66	14.62	9.78	10
	PS	78	18.21	13.46	20
12e. Assigning students to write for teacher as evaluator.	PR	66	7.96	9.32	10
	MD	66	11.74	9.26	10
	SE	67	15.82	12.39	10
	PS	78	18.72	19.89	20
12f. Assigning students to write for the teacher in a role other than evaluator.	PR	65	14.08	15.05	0
	MD	65	11.46	13.91	10
	SE	66	11.06	14.18	10
	PS	78	10.71	14.54	0
13. Assigning writing which uses literary works for students to read, analyze, and imitate.	PR	72	1.30	1.39	1
	MD	73	1.80	1.30	1
	SE	74	2.30	1.24	2
	PS	86	2.57	1.44	1
14. Relating composition assignments to units of study in content areas.	PR	73	2.84	1.56	2
	MD	73	3.07	1.42	3
	SE	73	2.95	1.44	4
	PS	86	2.95	1.65	4
15. Relating composition assignments to units of study in the other language arts.	PR	73	3.74	1.95	6
	MD	73	3.78	1.77	6
	SE	73	3.64	1.69	3
	PS	85	3.60	1.94	4
16a. Assigning students lessons in punctuation, spelling, and vocabulary from their own compositions.	PR	73	76.78	23.59	100
	MD	73	74.32	23.78	80
	SE	74	73.51	24.30	90
	PS	87	76.32	28.28	100
16b. Assigning students lessons in punctuation, spelling, and vocabulary from textbooks.	PR	74	20.74	21.32	0
	MD	73	22.12	19.98	0
	SE	74	22.97	20.79	10
	PS	87	17.20	20.71	0
17. Conduciting teacher/peer conferences during drafts.	PR	74	4.71	1.55	6
	MD	75	4.73	1.38	6
	SE	76	4.59	1.53	6
	PS	88	4.33	1.84	6
18. Conducting teacher/peer conferences between drafts.	PR	73	4.52	1.79	6
	MD	75	4.64	1.59	6
	SE	76	4.54	1.65	6
	PS	88	4.52	1.68	6

(table continues)

Item[a]	Grade[b]	n	Mean	SD	Mode
19. Using small, peer group conferencing to provide feedback.	PR	75	3.96	1.70	5
	MD	74	4.31	1.45	5
	SE	76	4.29	1.43	5
	PS	88	4.23	1.64	5
20. Providing opportunities for developing a composition as a group activity.	PR	75	2.64	1.59	1
	MD	75	2.28	1.46	1
	SE	76	1.88	1.48	1
	PS	88	1.59	1.48	1
21. Providing beginning writers opportunities to dictate their discourse.	PR	71	2.83	1.87	1
	MD	69	1.75	1.50	1
	SE	70	1.30	1.55	1
	PS	83	1.00	1.47	0
22. Providing opportunities to read compositions aloud to class.	PR	75	4.41	1.49	6
	MD	75	4.32	1.51	6
	SE	76	3.87	1.72	2
	PS	88	3.57	1.82	2
23. Publishing or displaying students' papers.	PR	72	4.79	1.39	6
	MD	73	4.66	1.37	6
	SE	75	4.11	1.51	6
	PS	86	3.11	2.07	1
24. Teachers sharing their writing.	PR	72	3.60	2.13	6
	MD	74	3.57	2.04	6
	SE	74	3.38	2.01	6
	PS	86	3.09	2.08	1
25a. Assessing compositions using an error count.	PR	65	5.46	18.08	0
	MD	67	4.70	13.92	9
	SE	67	4.70	13.81	0
	PS	81	4.32	12.72	0
25b. Assessing compositions using holistic scoring.	PR	66	52.80	30.61	50
	MD	68	41.47	26.81	50
	SE	67	35.97	23.87	50
	PS	82	35.97	23.87	50
25c. Assessing compositions using primary trait analysis.	PR	65	25.23	21.64	0
	MD	67	27.09	20.89	20
	SE	66	27.42	20.59	30
	PS	80	26.19	21.34	20
25d. Assessing compositions using analytic scoring.	PR	64	8.91	12.52	0
	MD	67	15.30	14.97	0
	SE	66	21.06	20.61	20
	PS	80	21.13	22.39	0

(table continues)

Item[a]	Grade[b]	n	Mean	SD	Mode
25e. Assessing compositions using discourse analysis.	PR	64	7.73	14.69	0
	MD	67	10.75	14.73	0
	SE	67	11.57	13.06	0
	PS	80	14.88	18.59	0
26. Assessing compositions to be graded after students revise at least one draft.	PR	73	5.15	1.57	6
	MD	75	5.24	1.35	6
	SE	76	5.30	1.17	6
	PS	87	5.18	1.31	6

[a]Descriptions of items have been shortened.

[b]PR = grades 1-4; MD = grades 5-8; SE = grades 9-12; PS = postsecondary.

Table 4

Description of Responses to Each Item in the Instrument

Item 1: Engaging students in rehearsal experiences (e.g., brief writing exercises, free writing, discussions, research, reading, field trips, planning) to prepare for each major composition assignment.*

Respondents appear to suggest that the method should be used almost always at the lower grade levels and with only one or two exceptions at the higher levels. The frequency decreases as the grade levels increase. Though the recommended frequency at the postsecondary level is significantly different from that at both the primary and middle levels, the difference is not great.

Item 2: Allowing students to select their own topics on which they write major composition assignments.

The responses appear to indicate that students at all levels should be able to select their own topics much of the time. Comments appear to indicate that most respondents favor the method only when the teacher is able to select the umbrella topic and the students make their own selection of a subtopic within the umbrella.

Item 3: Requiring students to write a formal outline rather than permitting them to explore what they have to say through a series of drafts for major transactional composition assignments.*

Respondents appear to suggest that the method almost never be used at the lower grade levels and be used only once on the upper levels. The frequency increases as grade levels increase. Though the

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*The responses to this item meet the criteria for establishing a norm for at least one grade level and can be considered to represent a tentative norm for the frequency with which the method should be used at that level.

recommended frequency at the postsecondary level differs significantly from that of both the primary and middle levels, the difference is not great.

> Item 4: Encouraging students to erase, cross out, insert, cut and paste all but their final drafts for major composition assignments.*

There is more agreement among respondents on this method than on any other. The method also received the highest mean frequency across grade levels. Over 90% of the respondents agree on the single rating of "always" for all grade levels.

> Item 5: Encouraging students to write more than one draft of a major composition assignment in which successive drafts include, when necessary, major revisions, such as changes in voice, tone, point of view, or organization of sections or paragraphs in addition to correcting vocabulary, usage, syntax, and mechanical errors to rewriting legibly.*

Respondents appear to be suggesting that the method be used slightly more than half the time at the primary level, moving toward all but once or twice in the middle grades, and progressing close to always by the postsecondary level. Criteria for establishing a norm are met on three--middle, secondary, and postsecondary--out of the four grade levels. This is one of the few items in which the frequency at the elementary level differs significantly from that of the middle level as well as from that of the secondary and postsecondary levels, though the differences are not great. In addition, the frequency at the middle level differs significantly from that of the postsecondary level, though again the difference is not great.

> Item 6: Assigning students writing activities for increasing fluency (e.g., free writing in which the student writes about anything for a 5- to 10-minute period without stopping, brief writing activities of approximately 5 to 10 minutes.

The authorities appear split concerning this method. While one-third of the population perceive the method should be used less than half the time, about one-half perceive the method should be used close to always. The mean frequency for the first group increases with an increase in grade level, with significant differences indicated between the primary and postsecondary and between the middle and postsecondary levels. The mean frequency for the second group remains approximately the same across grade levels. Comments on this item may shed some light on the discrepancy in agreement as well as the decrease in the frequency between the lower and upper grade levels. Most comments concern respondents' belief that the use of the method should depend on the individual student's development, implying that as students develop, as manifested in their movement up the grades, they become increasingly fluent and have less need for such activities. However, one-half of the respondents appear to believe, as indicated by their response ratings of a 5 or a 6, that despite this development students need activities for fluency.

Item 7: Encouraging students to write from their own experiences.*

While the responses meet the criteria for establishing a norm at the lower grade levels, the responses do not meet these criteria at the upper levels. Though respondents seem to agree that the method should be used all but once or twice on the primary and middle levels, they seem to be split between slightly more and slightly less than half on the upper levels. The mean frequency decreases with an increase in grade level, with the method used at the primary level all

but once or twice and declining to only about half the time at the postsecondary level. Significant differences are indicated between the primary and postsecondary levels. In addition, the item is one of the few in which the middle level differs significantly from the secondary as well as from the postsecondary levels, and in which the secondary level differs significantly from the postsecondary level.

Comments on this item may explain some of the discrepancy in the agreement. Most comments are concerned with the definition of the word "experience," which respondents appear to feel needs to be expanded to include intellectual experiences, involving research, etc. Participants who did not apply this broad interpretation when responding to this item may have rated the use lower than those who did, believing that as students develop they need to be able to deal with abstract concepts as well as have less need of writing ego-centered discourse. Those who applied the broader definition may have rated the use of the method higher.

> Item 8: Assigning students to write about ideas without regard for length (communicating their thoughts in their entirety) rather than limiting them to expressing themselves according to a specific syntactic unit, such as a sentence or a paragraph in an effort to teach them what a sentence or a paragraph is (e.g., students would be assigned "Describe an animal you like" rather than "Write a sentence/paragraph describing an animal you like").*

The responses meet the criteria for establishing a norm only at the primary level. Participants indicate the method should be used almost always. However, at all other levels the population is spread from "half the time" to "always." The mean frequency decreases with grade level but the changes are not great, with only the primary level

differing significantly from the secondary and postsecondary levels. While about half the population appears to believe the method should be used at all grade levels all but once or twice, the spread of the other half of the population leaves the recommended frequency for this method open to question.

Item 9: Requiring students to keep journals for at least a 6- to 8-week period each school year.*

This item consists of only a 2-point scale, requiring the participants to respond with either a yes or no. Over 80% of the population agree that this method should be used at the primary level and 90% agree it should be used at all other levels.

Item 10: Assigning students lessons in sentence combining, embedding, slotting, etc.*

The responses meet the criteria for establishing a norm only at the postsecondary level. Authorities indicate the method should only be used somewhere between several times per course and several times per month. However, there appears to be virtually no agreement at the primary and middle levels, with the spread about even over the entire range from "never" to "several times per week." By the secondary level, only a small percentage of the participants respond at either of the extremes, but are spread over the three middle ratings.

The mean frequency decreases with the increase in grade level, with significant differences indicated between the primary and postsecondary levels and between the middle and postsecondary levels. In addition, a significant difference is indicated between the secondary and postsecondary levels. The spread on the item appears to

reflect the amount of controversy appearing in the journals over this method, with the participants having arrived at a conclusion concerning the method's apparent lack of effectiveness at the postsecondary level.

> Item 11: Requiring students to write major composition assignments which are distributed among the four modes: (1) expressive--personal letters, journals, autobiographies, personal narratives; (2) poetic--satires, plays, poems, biographies, descriptions; (3) transactional/functional--business letters, reports for decision-making purposes, news stories, directions, objective expository prose, persuasive prose; and (4) transactional/expressive--subjective expository prose, including essays and content area reports which incorporate a personal viewpoint.*

The population appears to be in more disagreement concerning the frequency with which expressive and poetic discourse should be assigned at the primary level than at the upper levels. A little over half of the participants respond that expressive writing should comprise about 40% to 60% of the assignments, while a full 15% of the respondents suggest expressive writing should comprise only 25% of the assignments. In regard to poetic writing, participants' responses range about evenly between 20% to 50%. However, responses meet the criteria for establishing norms for transactional/functional and transactional/expressive writing, indicating those modes should not be assigned more than 10% of the time.

On the middle level, participants seem to have narrowed the range with which they perceive expressive and poetic writing being assigned. Two-thirds of the population recommend assigning expressive writing between 25% and 40% and poetic writing between 20% and 40%. At this level, however, the range in which they perceive the frequency

with which transactional/functional and transactional/expressive writing appears to increase, with about 80% of the population spread between recommending that the assignment of transactional/functional writing should be between 0% and 25% of the time and transactional/expressive writing between 10% and 25%. It would appear that respondents perceive that an equal amount of expressive and poetic writing should be assigned at this level, with whatever time is left over devoted to the two types of transactional writing.

The range for assigning expressive writing at the secondary level is narrowed even further with responses meeting the criteria for establishing a norm. Authorities indicate that the mode should be assigned between 20% and 30%. The range of assigning transactional/expressive and transactional/functional writing also meets the criteria for establishing a norm, with authorities recommending between 20% and 30%. Poetic writing appears to be the most questionable at this level, with 90% of the participants' responses ranging from 10% to 30%. It would appear that respondents perceive assigning transactional/functional and transactional/expressive writing about the same amount of time, with whatever small amount of time is left over devoted to poetic writing. The range for assigning each of the transactional modes also increases at this level, with about 70% of the population recommending assigning transactional/functional writing between 25% and 40% of the time and transactional/expressive writing between 20% and 40%. It seems that participants perceive the transactional modes should be assigned about twice as often as the expressive and poetic modes at this level.

In examining participants' responses to the various modes for each grade level, it appears that the frequency with which the expressive and poetic modes are taught decreases with an increase in grade level, with significant differences occurring between the primary level and the secondary and postsecondary levels and between the middle and postsecondary levels for both modes. Furthermore, the frequency with which both of the transactional modes are assigned increases with grade level, with significant differences also occurring between the primary level and the secondary and postsecondary levels and between the middle and postsecondary levels.

Respondents appear to suggest that at the primary level expressive and poetic writing should be taught about one-third of the time each, with the remaining time split between the two transactional modes. Furthermore, respondents indicate that the amount of time for the expressive and poetic modes should decrease and the amount of time for both types of transactional writing should increase with an increase in grade level, until by the postsecondary level the poetic and expressive modes are each taught about 15% of the time and the two transactional modes are each taught about one-third of the time.

> Item 12: Assigning students to write major composition assignments for a variety of audiences: (1) self; (2) peers; (3) known outside audience, e.g., parents; (4) unknown outside audience, e.g., employers, legislators; (5) teacher as evaluator; (6) teacher in a role other than evaluator, e.g., friend, writer.*

The greatest spread among responses concerns participants' perceptions of the percentage of assignments in which students should write for themselves and their peers. At the primary level, the

responses range from 10% to 50%. At the middle level, the range narrows slightly to between 10% and 40% for students to write for themselves and between 10% and 30% for students to write for their peers.

The range in which participants respond that students should write for the teacher in a role other than evaluator is from 0% to 20% of the assignments and remains the same for all four grade levels.

Participants are in far more agreement as to the frequency with which students should write for a known outside audience, an unknown outside audience, and the teacher as evaluator. While the participants' responses range from 0% to 20% at the primary level for a known outside audience, the responses meet the criteria for establishing a norm at the middle and secondary levels, recommending between 10% and 20%. However, the range increases to 0% to 30% at the postsecondary level. Responses also meet the criteria for establishing a norm for assigning writing for an unknown outside audience, recommending between 0% and 10% at the primary and middle levels and between 10% and 20% at the secondary level. However, the spread at the postsecondary level increases sharply, to 0% and 30%. Responses meet the criteria for assigning writing to the teacher as evaluator, at the primary level recommending only between 0% and 10%. However, the range increases after this level, with responses ranging from 0% to 20% at the middle and secondary levels and from 0% to 30% at the postsecondary level.

In examining participants' responses to the various audiences for each grade level, it appears that the percentage of assignments in

which students are expected to write for themselves decreases to about 10% with an increase in grade level, with significant differences occurring between the primary and the secondary and postsecondary levels. The percentages recommended for two other audiences remains about the same throughout the levels--writing for a known outside audience and writing for the teacher in a role other than an evaluator. Participants recommend both should be assigned for about 15% of the papers, respectively. Participants appear to recommend that the final two audiences, writing for an unknown outside audience and writing for the teacher as evaluator, should be assigned only about 5% of the time at the primary level but that the percentage in which these audiences are assigned should increase to close to 20% by the postsecondary level.

It would appear that at the primary level respondents perceive students devoting about two-thirds of all assignments to writing for themselves and their peers, with slightly less than a third of the remaining assignments divided between writing for a known outside audience and for the teacher in a role other than that of an evaluator. Respondents perceive only a very small number of assignments devoted to writing for an unknown outside audience and for the teacher as evaluator. But by the postsecondary level respondents appear to perceive students dividing their time fairly equally between writing for their peers, writing for a known outside audience, writing for an unknown outside audience, and writing for the teacher as evaluator, with the final 20% divided between writing for themselves and writing for the teacher in a role other than that of evaluator.

Item 13: Assigning writing which uses literary works (e.g., novels, essays, technical reports, etc.) for students to read, analyze, and imitate in their own writing.*

Responses meet the criteria for establishing a norm on the primary and middle levels, indicating the method should be used only once or twice. However, there is disagreement at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The population at this level appears to be spread evenly between the ratings of "only once or twice" to "slightly more than half." Comments appear to indicate that the definition of the word "imitate" is unclear and the inclusion of technical reports and essays as examples of literary works is questionable.

The frequency increases with an increase in grade level, with a significant increase occurring between the primary level and the secondary and postsecondary levels and between the middle level and the secondary and postsecondary levels. The results appear to provide means for interpreting the present literature which offers an ambiguous picture of how this method should be used. Myers and Gray (1983) and Donovan and McClelland (1980) seem to imply that the method provides an entire framework within which writing can be taught, though both also suggest the method should be used along with other methods. However, Eschholz (1980) and Gibson (1969) suggest the method simply serves as a device which teachers can use for helping students as they engage in the writing process. By using the method students can discover solutions to their own composition problems by studying how professional authors solve similar problems, and they can discover how to write in a new style, to use a different form of

organization, or to employ different syntactic rhythms by studying what a professional author does. The results of the present survey, which indicate authorities recommend a low percentage of use, appear to reinforce Eschholz' and Gibson's concept of this method rather than Myers and Gray's or Donovan and McClelland's.

Item 14: Relating major composition assignments to units of study in content areas (e.g., social studies, science, math, physical education, literature).

Responses range across the scale at all grade levels. The results appear to contradict the present literature which seems to imply a need to provide a high level of integration between writing and the content areas. It would appear that this item needs to be researched further.

Item 15: Relating major composition assignments to units of study in the other language arts (e.g., listening, reading, speaking, language, and literature).

Responses are spread rather evenly and range from "only once or twice" to "always." The results appear to contradict the present literature which seems to imply a need to provide a high level of integration between writing and the other language arts. It would appear that this item needs to be researched further.

Item 16: Assigning students lessons in usage, punctuation, spelling, and vocabulary derived from students' own compositions and from exercises in textbooks.*

Only at the postsecondary level do responses meet the criteria for establishing a norm, indicating that students should use textbooks less than 10% of the time. The recommendations for the frequency with which students' own compositions should be used range from 80% to

100%. This 20-point spread is indicative for the three other levels. At all four levels a sizeable portion of the population, approximately 15% at the primary, middle, and postsecondary levels and 25% at the secondary level, split from the majority and recommend significantly different percentages. This splinter group suggests the two methods be used on a 50/50 basis on the primary level, changing to a 60/40 (students' own compositions/exercises from textbooks) basis at the middle level. At the secondary level this splinter group suggests increasing the amount of time students spend learning from their own compositions further to between 50% and 70% and decreasing the amount of time spent on exercises in textbooks to 30% to 50% of the time. However, the respective increases and decreases still do not bring the mean frequency ratings of this group to as high a percentage as those recommended by the majority. Finally, at the postsecondary level, reversing its previous trend for increasing the amount of time students spend learning from their own compositions and decreasing the amount of time they spend using textbooks, this splinter group recommends dropping the amount of time students learn from their own compositions to between 40% and 50% and increasing the amount of time they learn from textbooks to between 50% and 60% of the time.

There appear to be two schools of thought concerning participants' responses to this item. One group, the majority, seems to believe that students should learn through their own compositions about 80% of the time with the other 20% supplemented by textbooks. The other group would achieve a more balanced approach between the two

methods, using each equally at the primary level, then decreasing the use of textbooks to less than half the time and increasing the use of students' own compositions to over half the time at the middle and secondary levels and, finally, decreasing the use of students' own compositions and increasing the use of textbooks back to half the time for each at the postsecondary level. The proposed mean frequencies of the first group appear to be congruent with present literature, but the proposed mean frequencies of the second group appear to reflect the schizophrenic viewpoint discussed in the overview of this report.

> Item 17: Conducting teacher and/or peer conferences during drafting of major composition assignments as a means of providing students with feedback for use in revising what they have already written and/or what they are planning to write.*

Responses for three--primary, middle, and secondary--of the four grade levels meet the criteria for establishing a norm. The frequency remains the same across the three grade levels, with respondents suggesting that the method should be used almost always. One-third of the population, however, is fairly evenly spread across the rest of the scale. At the postsecondary level there is a definite split with 61% of the participants responding between "all but once or twice" and "always" and 22% of the population responding at the other end--between "only once or twice" and "slightly less than half."

> Item 18: Conducting teacher and/or peer conferences between drafts as a means of providing students with feedback for use in revision of major compositions.*

Responses for three--primary, middle, and secondary--grade levels meet the criteria for establishing a norm. The frequency remains the

same across the three levels with respondents suggesting the method should be used almost always. One-third of the population is fairly evenly spread across the rest of the scale. At the postsecondary level, a split occurs with 60% of the participants responding that the method should be used almost always, while 11% of the participants recommend the method be used "slightly less than half the time."

Item 19: Using small group, peer conferencing to provide students with feedback to each other on their compositions.

The range of responses is spread about evenly at the primary, middle, and secondary levels from "half the time" to "always." At the postsecondary level there is a split with 11% suggesting the method should be used less than half the time, while 70% recommend it should be used more than half the time. The mean frequency is approximately the same for each grade level--slightly more than half.

Item 20: Providing students with opportunities to develop a composition as a group activity.*

Responses for three--middle, secondary, and postsecondary--grade levels meet the criteria for establishing a norm. At the primary level responses range from only once or twice to slightly more than half. The majority of the population suggests the activity should occur somewhere between only once or twice and slightly less than half at the primary, middle, and secondary levels and at the most once at the postsecondary level.

The frequency decreases with an increase in grade level, with significant differences indicated between the primary level and the secondary and postsecondary levels and between the middle and

postsecondary levels. Respondents appear to suggest that the method should be used almost half the time at the primary level, declining to just about once or twice by the postsecondary level.

> Item 21: Providing beginning writers with opportunities to dictate their discourse, either to the teacher, another student, or into a tape recorder, and then having someone transcribe the dictation onto the paper as a means of drafting, rather than requiring them to write out their discourse.*

Responses at three--middle, secondary, and postsecondary--grade levels meet the criteria for establishing a norm. Respondents appear to suggest the method should be used slightly less than half the time at the primary level, declining to only once or twice at the postsecondary level. The frequency decreases as grade level increases, with significant differences indicated between the primary level and the middle, secondary, and postsecondary levels and between the middle and postsecondary levels. Respondents appear to suggest that the method should be used slightly less than half the time at the primary level, declining to once once or twice at the postsecondary level.

> Item 22: Providing the students with opportunities to read their completed papers aloud to the class or to a small group of peers.

The majority of the responses at the primary level are spread from about "half the time" to "always." At the middle and secondary levels, the range expands to include "slightly less than half the time." At the postsecondary level a split occurs, with a little over half the participants responding more than half and a third of the participants responding less than half the time. Comments appear to

indicate that time is a factor in determining the frequency for this item. It is possible that respondents believe as the grade levels increase the amount of time available for such activity becomes less.

Item 23: Publishing or displaying students' completed compositions.*

Only at the primary level did the responses meet the criteria for establishing a norm. At the middle and secondary levels the frequencies were spread from "half the time" to "always." As with the previous item, a split occurs at the postsecondary level, with one-third of the population suggesting the method should be used less than half the time.

Item 24: Writing, reading aloud, publishing, or displaying their (the teachers') own compositions with their students.'

The respondents appear to be split into two groups: those who believe the method should be used almost always and those who believe it should be used less than half the time. The number of respondents in the first group decreases with an increase in grade level, while the number of persons in the second group increases with an increase in grade level.

Item 25: Assessing those major composition assignments that are to be graded by using a variety of approaches: (1) error count, using the total number of errors to determine a score or grade; (2) holistic scoring, providing a grade or score based on an overall impression of a piece; (3) primary trait analysis, scoring a piece of discourse according to how well the writer has achieved certain previously designated goals related to the context of the piece; (4) analytic scoring, scoring various aspects ranging from creativity to mechanics, then totaling the scores for each aspect to arrive at a score for the entire piece; (5) discourse analysis, providing a grade or score based on the cohesiveness or fluency of a piece.*

The greatest amount of disagreement across grade levels, as evidenced by the large spread among scores across grade levels and the high standard deviation, appears to concern respondents' perceptions of the percentage with which holistic scoring and primary trait analysis should be used. The range is from 0 to 100 with the highest percentage (19%) of participants responding to a single number at 50%. The scores are so spread out that there does not appear to be any way to interpret the responses logically. Responses are also spread for the use of analytic scoring, the majority of the population indicating between 0% and 30%.

Responses which meet the criteria for establishing a norm are related to the use of an error count and of discourse analysis for evaluation purposes.

It would appear that across grade levels an error count should be used no more than 5% of the time to evaluate papers. Analytic scoring and discourse analysis should each be limited to under 10% at the primary level. However, respondents appear to suggest that as grade levels increase there should be an increase in the use of these two types of evaluation, with analytic scoring being used as much as 20% on both the secondary and postsecondary levels and discourse analysis being used 15% of the time at the postsecondary level. Significant differences were found between the primary level and the secondary and postsecondary levels concerned with analytic scoring. Because of the wide disparity concerning the use of holistic and primary trait analysis, it appears these are open to question and a recommendation cannot be provided.

The disparity over the use of both holistic scoring and primary trait analysis seems to contradict the amount of emphasis and encouragement which has been given to these two methods in the present literature, as well as the attention these methods have received at conferences at which workshops have been provided to train teachers in these methods. Again, the percentages recommended for analytic scoring seem to ignore the amount of attention which has been given to Diederich's plan (1974) and the numerous adaptations of this plan by such educators as Kirby and Liner (1981). One might have expected that the percentages recommended for its use might have been greater, especially at the upper levels.

The percentages recommended for using discourse analysis appear to reflect the amount of criticism which this method has received within the last few years. The percentages recommended for error counts as a method of evaluation also reflect the amount of disregard which this method has had for the past three-quarters of a century.

> Item 26: Assessing those major composition assignments that are to be graded after students have revised at least one draft, rather than before they have had an opportunity to revise.

Responses at all grade levels meet the criteria for establishing a norm. Respondents appear to suggest that the method should be used almost always. The frequency remains about the same for all grade levels.